because it was the only book on the subject throughout this period. There is very much difference between the first and second editions, respectively, of 1540 and 1545. The book was translated by Richard Jonas from the Latin version, entitled *"De partu hominis,"* and was not intended as a scientific treatise, but merely as a guide for prospective mothers and midwives.

Many books were written about the plagues that periodically swept over Europe. Benedict Canutus wrote the first *"Treatise against pestilence"* in 1510, and equally prominent in this field were the works of John Caius, one of the great leaders of medicine in England, who studied at Cambridge and under Vesalius in Padua.

So far I have briefly summarized two of the larger groups of medical books in the Huntington Library, and I will mention only five more representative works. In the first place, Andreas Vesalius' anatomical masterwork, in one of its best Paris editions, printed in 1565. Another item of great rarity is Diaz de Ysla's *Tractado contra el mal serpentino* of 1539, which is the first exhaustive study published about lues, or, as it was then called, "El mal serpentino." The three remaining works are, likewise, exceedingly rare and very little known, in spite of the fact that they belong to the earliest books printed on the American continent. They originate from Mexico, shortly after the days of the conquistadores. They are Alonso Lopez de los Hinojosas' *Summa y recopilación de chirurgia, con un arte para sagrar.* Its date is 1578. This was followed, within a year, by Augustin Farfan's *Tractado breve de anathomia y chirurgia y de algunas enfermedades,* and in 1592 by his *Tractado breve de medecina.*

The bibliographical divisions of the Huntington Library have compiled two lists of medical books in this library. The first one, called *Incunabula Medica,* contains over 500 titles; and the second, called *Medical Knowledge in Tudor England,* lists 60 titles, with short descriptions. These lists, describing certain groups of medical books, as their titles imply, can be obtained from the Library's publication office. Rather recently, a third mimeographed list has been compiled of a somewhat different nature. Pursuant to its policy of preservation, the Huntington Library has reproduced in the past several thousands of its rarer works by photostat, and is now prepared to print and supply copies of them. Among these thousands of reproductions are many works relating to medicine and science, and the list referred to, containing 270 such titles, is now available on request.

Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery.

AN ADDRESS TO A BOTTLE BY THE POET HORACE[1]

By DOUGLASS W. MONTGOMERY, M. D.
San Francisco

ON receiving the July Bulletin of the San Francisco Medical Society my eye caught a short résumé of the transactions of "The Medical Friends of Wine." Some members drank it at their meals as an aid to digestion and to sociability; some spoke of its excellent effects as a medicine; and others of its soothing and relaxing qualities.

Undoubtedly much good can be accomplished in this way in encouraging the leisurely, moderate enjoyment of alcoholic beverages, and it is along the line repeatedly followed by the poet Horace, whose "Address to a Bottle" is one of his most felicitous efforts.

* * *

One day Horace went upstairs to his apotheca or wine room to get a jar of wine that had been bottled of even date with his own birth, and which was to serve for entertainment at a dinner given to an old friend, M. Valerius Messalla Corvinus. While having it conveyed downstairs he reflected on the many ways its contents affects human beings; and they are infinite—as many, indeed, as there are types of minds. Some it makes merry; others mad; still others insanely in love; while some, under its influence, go quietly to sleep. There is nothing else in the whole pharmacopeia that causes such a variety of reactions.

Here Horace grew tender and coaxing; and, addressing the jar personally, said: "My dearest jar, do none of these things. Do not even soothe to sleep; and when my old friend requests it, pour out an even mellower wine (languidiora vina) so that, under your gently stimulating influence, we may spend a delightful evening together."

Then he proceeds to relate some of the good qualities which a good wine, when properly and temperately enjoyed, should possess, and tells the jar that Messalla, though a scholar steeped in philosophic lore, is no ill-tempered person, but one keenly appreciative of a good, well-seasoned wine, bottled now for at least forty years. Wine such as this would warm up the virtue of even stern old Cato; it gently but firmly stimulates the dull; it makes the overcareful forget his cares, and it gives courage to the anxious and oppressed.

Finally, he requests his gentle bottle to bring to this evening's enjoyment Liber, the God of Free Expression; Venus, the Goddess of Mutual Affection, and the lovely Graces; and he hopes that the banquet may last till daylight!

* * *

Horace and Messalla were very old friends, a friendship tried through many a vicissitude. As youths they had studied together in Athens and, also as youths, they had quite naturally joined the party of the idealist Brutus against Augustus and Anthony. After the disastrous Battle of Philippi, where Brutus was killed, they both escaped. Messalla, as a member of a wealthy senatorial family, may not have suffered severely for having joined the defeated party, but Horace was reduced to poverty through the confiscation of his paternal estate.

Messalla afterwards joined the party of Augustus, and was present at the Battle of Actium, became consul in Aquitaine, in Gaul, and even received the honor of a triumph. At the time of this banquet he had retired to a life of literary ease and

1 Horace: Od. III:XXI. The term "bottle" is employed here as giving a more natural, though not so exact, translation for amphora than "jar." We bottle our wines; they put theirs in jars.

comfort, and was a patron of literature, notably of the poet Tibullus.[2]

* * *

After the Battle of Philippi Horace had severe trials. His estate, as previously mentioned, had been confiscated, but he was comparatively fortunate in securing a clerkship in the treasury department of the government, where he remained computing taxes with the awkward Roman letters until, by the publication of some of his satires, he became known. His case was a parallel to that of Bobbie Burns, who got a place as gauger (inspector) of whisky stills in the excise in Scotland. So fate fashioned two of her finest brains, and then provided them with very lowly occupations.

* * *

The bottle, too, had passed through its dark days, stored as it was in a garret, and exposed to the soot and the smoke of the household fires. It must be remembered that the Roman houses had no chimneys and that, therefore, the upper rooms were smoky, and were given over to slaves and a wine room. The smoke was supposed to aid in ripening the contents of the amphorae, or jars. Undoubtedly, like Horace and Messalla, the bottle showed on its exterior the marks of advancing years and, like them, through long years of trial it had become inwardly mellow, and when its spirit was poured out it sparkled and was ready to add to the pleasure of the occasion if properly and moderately enjoyed.

* * *

The aging of wine has always been regarded with favor and reverence; and rightly so, as it tends, like ourselves, to grow mellow with years. In this, up to a certain point, the container participates. Vile saepe cadus nobile nectar habet—"the best wine comes out of an old bottle." To produce a flask covered with cobwebs is a matter of pride in an otherwise immaculate household. Here, again, the comparison with human beings holds good, since oftentimes, under a threadbare coat, lies an excellent understanding and, as Burton remarks: "Horace himself was a little blear-eyed, contemptible fellow, yet who so sententious and wise?"[3]

* * *

In reflecting over what I have related we may recall that, in addressing the bottle as he came downstairs, Horace admonishes it to pour out an even mellower wine. There is an important meaning behind this phrase, languidiora vina, especially important to medical men in prescribing for their patients. Both Messalla and Horace were upwards of 40 years of age and were steady users of the product of the grape, and, therefore, would tend to become allergic to this form of sugar. As Rabelais remarks, they probably had begun to recognize the symptoms of approaching age though they would tell it to no one; and although they found wine more than ever agreeable to their taste, yet more than ever they feared happening upon a bad wine.[4] This fully explains, I think, the solicitude of Horace in the present instance.

Whisky, however, especially that from an old barrel, is free from this defect; but, unfortunately for them, neither Messalla nor Horace knew of this delightful beverage—delightful, I would say, when used moderately and circumspectly.

* * *

Much has been written about wine, both for and against, but very little of the container, which undoubtedly is a neglect. We see, however, that Horace did not neglect the bottle, but addressed a beautiful ode to it, and in a most personal way. Horace and Messalla are dead and gone, the bottle is likely broken, and its contents we know were consumed; but the song, although nearly two thousand years old, remains, and grows even mellower and more enjoyable as time silently passes on.

450 Sutter Street.

2 M. Valerius Messalla Corvinus was born in 64 B. C., and was one year younger than Horace, born in 65 B. C.
3 Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy, 2:10.
4 Rabelais. Pantagruel. Bk. II, ch. XXVIII.

HISTORY OF SAN FRANCISCO COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY

ONE OF FOUNDERS ARRIVED IN 1850; BEGAN PRACTICE IN TENT

IN the mad rush for California gold ninety years ago there were doctors in San Francisco whose thoughts were upon the practice of their profession. While the butcher, the baker and the candlestick maker were streaking it for the Sierra foothills to find a fortune, a handful of physicians were contemplating the formation of a medical society here.

The records of those dim and distant days have almost faded from existence, but we know that one of the founders of the first medical society here was Robert K. Nuttall. He arrived here in May, 1850, and with Dr. Robert Mackintosh, son of Sir William Mackintosh, a professor in the Edinburgh Medical School, he started to practice medicine in their tent, pitched on North Beach. Doctor Nuttall later married Magdalena, daughter of John Parrot, and built a home next door to his father-in-law on the northwest corner of Montgomery and California streets—in the very heart of the present financial district.

Due to the wanderlust of those days, the first medical society died from neglect. It was reborn when a group of physicians gathered on June 22, 1853, and formed the San Francisco Medical Society. Dr. Theodore Dimon was elected president. The physician chosen to fill the vice-presidency was Stephen R. Harris, who that year [actually] served as the third mayor of this city.

Due, perhaps, to the same factors which militated against the permanency of the first society, this reorganization of 1853 did not "take" either, and there were at least three subsequent reorganizations.

FORTY MEMBERS IN 1868

By 1868 the San Francisco County Medical Society seemed to be launched upon a certain and continuous course, under the guidance of Dr. J. P. Whitney. There were forty members, many of whom as John F. Morse, H. H. Toland, Henry Gibbons Sr. and Jr., bear names well known to students of local medical history.

Their Code of Medical Ethics, Section I, Article I, begins: "A physician should not only be ever